

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6436
SECDEF WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO USMISSION USNATO
CINCUSAFE IMMEDIATE
HQ 3AF RAF MILDENHALL IMMEDIATE
USNMR SHAPE
SAC HQ OFFUTT AFB IMMEDIATE

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DEFENSE ALSO FOR ASD/ISA MC GIFFERT; ASD/PA ROSS; CSAF;
AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY AF CHAYES

HOLD FOR OPENING OF BUSINESS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: UK MPOL MILI NATO
SUBJECT: RAF GREENHAM COMMON

REF: A) STATE 129483; B) LONDON 7246; C) LONDON 8069;
D) LONDON 7879

SUMMARY: DISCUSSIONS WITH MOD REFLECT ITS WILLINGNESS
TO HEAR OUT COMMUNITY PROTESTS BUT ALSO ITS DESIRE NOT
TO INVOLVE ITSELF IN THE PLANS OF THE GREENHAM COMMON
CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO WASHINGTON
JUNE 1. MOD BELIEVES IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO PERSUADE
REPRESENTATIVES TO DEFER TRAVEL. A CALL FROM THE GREEN-
HAM COMMON CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE CONFIRMS THE INTENTION OF
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THE REPRESENTATIVES TO PROCEED TO WASHINGTON JUNE 1.
THE REPRESENTATIVES ALREADY HAVE CONTACTED WHITE HOUSE
DIRECTLY BY PHONE. IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND IN LIGHT OF
ADVERSE MEDIA COMMENT IF REPRESENTATIVES ARE NOT RECEIVED
IN WASHINGTON BY US OFFICIALS, WE URGE THAT WASHINGTON
AGAIN CONSIDER ITS POSITION. END SUMMARY.

1. IN CONSULTATIONS MAY 23 WITH MOD PURSUANT TO REF A, PERRY, HEAD OF DS-8, BASED UPON DISCUSSION WITH NELSON (DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY FOR AIR), STRESSED THAT: (A) HMG IS NOT IN A POSITION ITSELF TO DEAL WITH THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM CREATED BY THE INSISTENCE OF THE GREENHAM COMMON CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE THAT THE LADIES VISIT WASHINGTON TO MAKE KNOWN THEIR VIEWS; AND (B) THEY DO NOT BELIEVE THE GROUP, WHICH SEEKS MAXIMUM PUBLIC IMPACT, CAN BE PERSUADED TO DEFER THE TRIP. HENCE, IN MOD VIEW, NEITHER APPROACH PROPOSED BY THE US IS VIABLE.

2. MEANWHILE, WE HAVE LEARNED FROM THE CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE THAT: (A) IT HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH "WHITE HOUSE DEPARTMENT THREE" IN WASHINGTON BY PHONE TO INFORM IT THAT THE TWO LADIES WILL ARRIVE ON JUNE 1, AND THAT THE PERSON TO WHOM THEY SPOKE UNDERTOOK TO RELAY THIS TO THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITY; AND (B) THE LADIES ARE EXPECTED TO BE IN WASHINGTON JUNE 1 AND 2 AND "WILL DELIVER A LETTER TO THE WHITE HOUSE" IF NO ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE TO RECEIVE THEM. SINCE OUR CONSULTATIONS WERE STILL IN TRAIN WITH THE MOD, WE VOLUNTEERED NO COMMENT TO THE COMMITTEE. IT IS (A) CLEAR FROM THEIR REMARKS, HOWEVER, THAT THEY ARE SERIOUS, (B) EVIDENT THEY WANT TO WRING MAXIMUM PUBLIC RELATIONS MILEAGE FROM THEIR ENDEAVORS AND (C) APPARENT THEY WILL NOT BE EASILY DETERRED FROM
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THE TRIP ON JUNE 1 BY ANY PRACTICAL STEP SHORT OF AN ANNOUNCEMENT THAT GREENHAM COMMON IS NO LONGER AN OPTION.

3. WE NONETHELESS COULD APPROACH THE COMMITTEE AND INVITE THEM TO DEFER THE VISIT. WHILE WE DOUBT THEY WILL WANT TO DO SO, IF WE PROMISED THEM A FIRM DATE WHEN THEY COULD BE RECEIVED AND GAVE THEM NAMES OF SPECIFIC OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON, THIS MIGHT LEAD THEM TO AGREE TO DEFERRAL. ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY MAY REJECT DEFERRAL ON THE GROUNDS THAT (A) THEY ARE INTENTIONALLY BEING PUT OFF AND THAT ONE DEFERRAL WILL ONLY LEAD TO ANOTHER AND (B) THEIR CHANCES OF HAVING AN IMPACT WILL BE GREATER IF THEY TRAVEL WELL IN ADVANCE OF A DECISION. (MOREOVER, CONSISTENT WITH THE UK OBJECTIVE OF DISASSOCIATING THE DECISION ON GREENHAM COMMON FROM THE PROTEST EFFORT (SEE PARA 15 BELOW), IT MAY BE PREFERABLE TO HAVE AS MUCH TIME AS POSSIBLE BETWEEN THE VISIT AND THE DECISION.)

4. THE MOD IS NOT PREPARED NOW TO PUBLICLY ABANDON THE GREENHAM COMMON OPTION, PERRY SAYS, BECAUSE THEY WANT ALL OPTIONS OPEN UNTIL THE FINAL DECISION IS MADE. AN

ESSENTIAL PART OF THE EXERCISE FROM THEIR POINT OF VIEW
WILL BE THEIR ABILITY TO CITE AT THE TIME THE DECISION
IS ANNOUNCED THE REASONS FOR SELECTING OR NOT SELECTING
THE SITES NOW IN PLAY. THEIR INTENT IS TO ASCRIBE THE

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REASON FOR ABANDONING GREENHAM COMMON TO SOME TECHNICAL
ASPECT, SUCH AS THE NEARBY PRESENCE OF A NUCLEAR
FACILITY, RATHER THAN THE PROTEST MOVEMENT, FOR OBVIOUS
REASONS.

5. DESPITE THE US PREFERENCE FOR GREENHAM COMMON (REF
A), MOD WILL NOT ACCEPT IT FOR KC-135 AIRCRAFT, PERRY
SAYS. MOD PREFERENCE NOW IS FOR RAF FAIRFORD TO BE
SELECTED BY USAF. HOWEVER, MOD IS "UNDECIDED" ABOUT
BRIZE NORTON, BUT ASSUMES IT WILL BE THE US CHOICE. MOD
HESITANCY ABOUT BRIZE NORTON IS BASED UPON CONCERN THAT
IT COULD NOT ACCEPT THE 50 ADDITIONAL KC-135S WE ARE
LIKELY TO DEPLOY TO THE UK, AND MOD HOPES THE US WILL
GIVE DUE CONSIDERATION TO THIS FACTOR. WARTIME LOADING
CONSIDERATIONS, IN THE RAF'S VIEW, POINT TO FAIRFORD.

6. PERRY SAID PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY FOR AIR

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WELLBELOVED IS MEETING WITH MOD STAFF RE FAIRFORD AND BRIZE NORTON ON MAY 24. THE MEETING WILL ALSO ADDRESS THE TACK WELLBELOVED WILL TAKE IN COMMONS ON MAY 26 (REF C). ALSO, A DELEGATION OF MPS IS SEEING MULLEY ON MAY 27 ABOUT FAIRFORD. THE SOONER MOD HAS US VIEWS, PERRY SAID, THE MORE HELPFUL IT WOULD BE TO WELLBELOVED AND MULLEY IN MANAGING THE DISCUSSIONS IN PARLIAMENT AND WITH MPS ELSEWHERE.

7. PERRY SAID MOD IS PREPARED TO MAKE A DECISION ON AN ALTERNATIVE SITE AND TO GO PUBLIC WITH IT NLT JUNE 15, PROVIDED USAF GIVES MOD THE INPUTS FROM THEIR SITE SURVEYS NLT MAY 29.

8. THE MAY 24 SURVEY (PARA 5, REF A) IS OF RAF WADDINGTON. SINCE THIS SITE WAS INCLUDED IN THE USAF SURVEY AT HMG'S REQUEST FOR COSMETIC REASONS, MOD FEELS IT IS UNNECESSARY TO HOLD UP A DECISION BASED ON SURVEY RESULTS ON WADDINGTON AND OTHER SITES. THESE ARE SIMPLY NOT RELEVANT, THEREFORE, TO THE TIMING OF US CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, IN THE VIEW OF MOD.

9. IF THE DECISION IS FOR FAIRFORD, PERRY SAID A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT COULD BE MADE WITHIN 48 HOURS OF THAT DECISION. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF THE US WANTS BRIZE NORTON, HE THOUGHT IT WOULD TAKE PERHAPS UNTIL JUNE 15 TO SETTLE THE MATTER. HE EXPLAINED FOR OUR EARS ONLY THAT THE EXTRA TIME WOULD BE NEEDED TO DECIDE WHERE RAF ELEMENTS VACATING BRIZE NORTON SHOULD BE DEPLOYED SO THE US COULD SETTLE THERE.

10. WE AND MOD DO NOT HOLD TEXT OF CHAYES-SMITH LETTER REFERRED TO IN PARA 3 OF REF A, BUT WE ASSUME IT ADDS

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NOTHING TO LINE WE HAVE BEEN TAKING HERE THAT COMMENT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO HMG. MOD HAS NO PROBLEM WITH THIS APPROACH AND CONTINUES TO HEAR OUT PROTESTERS FROM COMMUNITIES INVOLVED. BUT MOD ALSO POINTS OUT THAT THIS APPROACH DOES NOT MEET THE CONCERNS OF THE GREENHAM COMMON COMMITTEE, THAT SEES WASHINGTON AS ITS BEST RECOURSE.

11. AGAINST THE FOREGOING SITUATION, WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT (A) WE CAN EXPECT NO FURTHER HELP FROM THE BRITISH IN DEALING WITH THE GREENHAM COMMON CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE AND INDEED UK STONEWALLING WITH THE COMMITTEE IS POINTING THEM TOWARD WASHINGTON; (B) HMG WILL GO ON FAST AS IT CAN IN TAKING A DECISION, BUT IT WILL NOT BE FAST ENOUGH TO SATISFY THE GREENHAM COMMON CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE BEFORE THE LADIES ARE SCHEDULED TO LEAVE JUNE 1; (C) WE SEE NO WAY, SHORT OF DENYING ENTRY, TO PREVENT THE LADIES' TRIP TO WASHINGTON IF THEY INSIST ON GOING AND SUCH A DENIAL WOULD LIKELY PLAY TO THEIR DESIRE FOR PUBLICITY; (D) IF THEY DO GO TO WASHINGTON, AS NOW INTENDED, THEY WILL MAKE THE MOST IN THE MEDIA OF OFFICIAL REFUSALS TO SEE THEM. THEREFORE, UNLESS THE US DECIDES TO SEEK DEFERRAL OF THE TRIP PER PARA 3 ABOVE, THE BASIC ISSUE FOR WASHINGTON DECISION, IT SEEMS TO US, REMAINS WHETHER TO RECEIVE THE LADIES.

12. IN TAKING A DECISION, WASHINGTON SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT THE PLANS OF THE LADIES TO GO TO WASHINGTON HAVE BEEN WIDELY AND SYMPATHETICALLY VIEWED HERE AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS AT WORK AND OF FAITH THAT IN THE US OUR OPEN APPROACH TO PUBLIC ISSUES WILL ASSURE THEM A HEARING AS IT ASSURED, FOR EXAMPLE, A HEARING OF THE CONSIDERATIONS SURROUNDING CONCORDE LANDING RIGHTS. WILLINGNESS OF US AUTHORITIES TO HEAR

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THEM OUT THUS WILL GENERATE A POSITIVE PUBLIC IMAGE;
FAILURE TO DO SO WILL BE EXPLOITED AS INCONSISTENT WITH
THE ADMINISTRATION'S OPEN APPROACH.

13. FOR OUR PART, WHILE WE UNDERSTAND THE RISKS OF
PRECEDENT CITED IN REF A, IT STRIKES US THAT THERE ARE
RELATIVELY FEW COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD WHERE WE HAVE
FORCES AND WHERE, AT THE SAME TIME, SO OPEN AN APPROACH
TO THE CONCERNS OF ORDINARY CITIZENS IS A HALLMARK OF
THE SOCIETY. SO FAR AS WE KNOW, MOREOVER, THE GREENHAM
COMMON ISSUE HAS NOT BEEN PUBLICIZED OUTSIDE THE UK AND
THE US, BUT IT LIKELY WILL BE IF THE LADIES ARE TURNED
AWAY.

14. FINALLY, IT IS PROBABLY TRUE THAT SOME WILL ASCRIBE
A DECISION AGAINST GREENHAM COMMON TO PUBLIC PROTEST.
BUT, THE OFFICIAL MOD LINE WILL NOT, AS POINTED OUT
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ABOVE, AND THAT CAN BE OUR LINE AS WELL, IN THE UK AND
ELSEWHERE.

15. GUIDANCE REQUESTED: ANY FURTHER THOUGHTS WASHINGTON
WISHES US TO CONVEY TO MOD OR GREENHAM COMMON CAMPAIGN
COMMITTEE PRIOR TO THE PLANNED DEPARTURE OF THE LADIES
JUNE 1.

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